

College transfer policy simplified

By **MOLLY WILLIAMSON**
State Journal Staff Writer

Community college business students now can transfer all of their college credits to the state university of their choice.

The Council of Chief Academic Officers signed a memorandum of agreement Monday which calls for a "seamless" transfer of credits for any Kentucky Community and Technical College System business student who completes the 60 hours required for an associate's degree.

The credits will transfer to any of the 14 public university business programs, See **TRANSFERS, A3**

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and students will not have to retake courses, which wastes time and money, said Terri Giltner, director of marketing and public relations for Kentucky Community and Technical College System.

"We think that it's wonderful," Giltner said of the agreement. "Moving in that direction was part of the original vision of House Bill 1 (which called for higher education reform). We are one state. It only makes sense that we work together to help students easily move on and earn their four-year degree."

The council chose the business program for the first statewide transfer agreement because it is

one of the most popular community college programs, said James Applegate, vice president of academic affairs for the Council on Postsecondary Education.

Kentucky Community and Technical College System educated about 82,000 students last year, Giltner said.

According to council documents, more than 300 business students in community colleges will benefit from this transfer agreement.

Previously, individual KCTCS campuses had agreements with local four-year universities that allowed students to spend two years in community college and

finish their bachelor's degree at the university, said Lisa Brosky, spokeswoman for Jefferson Community College.

For example, Jefferson Community College and the University of Louisville have an agreement that information technology students can transfer all of their credits to Louisville and finish with a four-year degree, Brosky said.

However, each individual agreement was a little different, said Bob Albert, business college dean at Morehead State University.

Each university's business program was a little different, which often required students to retake

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courses, Brosky said.

Monday's agreement simplifies and universalizes the process, said Robert Reber, Western Kentucky University.

For Kentucky State University, the new transfer agreement will help the college to recruit and retain more students, said Mary Evans Sias, president.

"It will help enrollment grow and help those students make a seamless bridge to Kentucky State University," Sias said. "The sell for them is they know they won't lose hours, and this will save them money. It also helps us in our evaluation of their transcripts, because we know they have completed

those hours."

This statewide agreement opens up more opportunities for business students because they can choose which four-year university they want to attend without worrying about losing credits, Brosky said.

However, the agreement does not make it mandatory for community college students to continue their education, just easier, Brosky said.

"They may not have plans to go on and get their four-year degree right now, but they may want to in the future," Brosky said. "The way the market is going, employers will continue to require more

and more education ... and the goal was to have all of their credits transfer easily."

Starting at a community college has many advantages, Brosky said. It is generally about a third cheaper than four-year universities and allows students to review or learn certain skills necessary for university courses.

KCTCS Chancellor Keith Bird said by having agreements like these, the council is helping colleges to be more successful institutions with more successful students.

"This is a big step forward for us in many ways," Bird said.